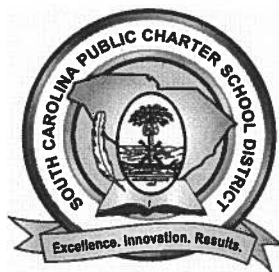


South Carolina Public Charter School District

Technology Plan

2009-2011

Excellence. Innovation. Results.



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Dr. Wayne Brazell

Rodney Clay
Information Technology Manager
rclay@scpcsd.sc.gov

South Carolina Public Charter School District
3700 Forest Drive, Suite 406
Columbia, SC 29204
Telephone: (803) 734-8322 Fax: (803) 734-8325
<http://www.sccharter.org>

District Profile

- The South Carolina Public Charter School District was created through the South Carolina Charter School Act, passed by the S.C. General Assembly in 2005. The legislation created a legitimate avenue for parents, teachers, and community members to take responsible risks and create new, innovative, and more flexible ways of educating children within the public school system. The goal of charter schools is to encourage academic excellence, educational improvement, and cultural diversity in South Carolina. With students spanning the state of South Carolina, technology plays an important tool in all of our schools as we aspire to educational excellence. After one year of planning and organizing, the SCPCSD had five charter schools open under its auspices in August 2008. In the 2009-10 school year, seven schools are operating in the district, with four more approved to open in 2010. Our seven schools consist of five virtual schools and two traditional, brick-and-mortar schools. Enrollment doubled from the first year of operation to the second: from 2,500 students to over 5,000. Grade levels in our district are dependent upon the individual school, but, as a district, we have grades K-12.

Demographics

- Enrollment based on district's 2009-2010 135 Day Count by grade, gender and race.

Grade	Enrollment	Male	Female	White	African-American	Other
K-5	1841	967	874	1297	300	244
6-8	1522	802	720	1112	228	182
9-12	3182	1355	1827	2321	550	311

School Status

Grades:	Grades K – 12 (not every school offers the full grade range)
Number of students:	6545 (based on 2009-2010 135 Day Count)
Free and reduced lunch:	3102 (47%)

Current Technology Status

- Each school establishes their own technology goals and objectives but, staff development, in the area of instructional technology is one-on-one. SMARTboard, PowerSchool/PowerTeacher and various open source initiatives are planned.
- Parents are involved with school and district activities through a variety of outlets including the district level Parent Involvement Committee, where such technological tools as a CRM and discussion forum are being considered as communication resources to better engage the parents.
- For the final year of SASI, 2009-2010, all final grades are posted to SASI. One virtual school is evaluating a secured web portal where report cards for their students can be posted to allow parents quick and easy access to report cards. The district is currently in the process of migrating to PowerSchool and evaluating PowerSchool's Parent/Guardian Portal.

- Schools in our district require students, parents, and teachers to adhere to their individual Acceptable Use Policy as well as FERPA.
- Each school meets CIPA's web content filtering requirements using a variety of solutions including Lightspeed and DansGuardian.

Technology has drastically changed how teachers teach and how students learn. We recognize technology is meant to supplement the learning experience.

Executive Summary

- Due to low school funding for our students, South Carolina Public Charter School District focuses its technology plan on a combination of creatively acquiring and distributing technology as well as grant opportunities. Recently adding a grant writer to our district staff in the 2009-2010 school year, the district will look to expand the grant opportunities to provide new technology, training, and support for all schools, teachers, and students. Such grant initiatives will also allow the schools to enhance existing technologies to further maximize instructional efforts. The district has adopted the South Carolina Department of Education's technology plan as the model for integrating technology into the curriculum. The schools within our district have always had a strong professional development plan, which continues to be updated to incorporate technology into the curriculum. The district will continue to work with other agencies, cohorts, and vendors and pursue funding sources in order to provide the best resources for our district.

South Carolina Public Charter School District, for the 2010-2011 school year, will be using the new student information system, PowerSchool. It is currently unknown how the additional resources and hardware will impact this new system. An additional component with this new student information system will be a parent portal, where parents will potentially be able to monitor attendance and academic performance of their children.

District Needs Assessment

- Enrollment in South Carolina Public Charter School District is expected to double again in the 2010-2011 school year, which would make the district one of the largest districts in the state. As the district continues to grow, and the utilization of technology increases, South Carolina Public Charter School District will require more bandwidth, both for Internet utilization as well as for internal LAN at each school. This increase will allow the district and its schools many new options that will streamline productivity, reduce the total cost of ownership on network related equipment and also create a more efficient technical staff. By increasing bandwidth at the district and its schools, we can begin to move to more centralized solutions that will reduce overall costs as well as further solidify our district's compliance with FERPA regarding our student information system. The increase would also allow the district to move to a consolidated financial system as well as provide a single point of access and authentication with DISCUS, South Carolina's Virtual Library, and other such resources. Meetings have already taken place with South Carolina Public Charter School District and the Division of State Information Technology with upgrading the T-1 Dedicated Internet Access connection at many of our schools to a MetroE connection, which will provide faster access to the Internet and a

lower monthly cost.

In an additional effort to reduce cost, the district and its schools will also look to additional telephone lines as a means for communication to reduce expenses incurred with traveling.

Many schools with the district will continue to use the Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment tool to assist each school in measuring and tracking the academic progress of their students. MAP has proven to be cost-effective with its strong analytical capabilities.

Because the district's Information Technology department consists of one FTE as well as budget cuts and school funding, the IT department will continue utilizing community support as well as open source technologies whenever possible. This gives maximum potential to allocate the department's resources to best serve the district. In addition, the use of technology related grants will continue to be pursued, such as Enhancing Education Through Technology.

District Mission, Vision and Goal Statements

- Our Mission
 - The mission of South Carolina Public Charter School District is to improve student learning and increase learning opportunities in South Carolina through the creation of innovative, high-quality charter schools.
- Technology Vision Statement
 - The vision of South Carolina Public Charter School District is to provide an environment that actively pursues and encourages the use of new technologies and innovation by all district staff, teachers, students and parents. Through professional development and community outreach programs, our educators, students and members of the community will become technologically literate and proficient users of today's technologies.
- District Technology Goal
 - South Carolina Public Charter School District is committed to the improvement and integration of technology into everyday instruction and everyday operations for our teachers and staff. Our schools exemplify this with special emphasis on our virtual schools as technology is a key tool to the delivery of curriculum. Providing "just in time" technology and "just in time" training will allow our district and its schools to seamlessly integrate technology into our district. This integration of technology into our curriculum will greatly enhance student achievement and will streamline our operations and make our staff more efficient.

Five Technology Dimensions

South Carolina Public Charter School District's Technology Plan focuses on five areas essential to technology integration: **The Learning Environment, Professional Capacity, Instructional**

Capacity, Community Connections, and Support Capacity.

The Learning Environment and Instructional Capacity, focus on this area will include the use of technology as a tool for achieving state curriculum standards through enhanced problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. These skills are essential to our student's success in the ever-changing and increasingly technological society.

Objective

Ensure infrastructure will support the academic environment.

Provide relevant teaching and learning resources based on student data and academic goals.

The network infrastructure is secure and provides bandwidth that supports technology needed at the schools such as online learning and data collection.

Strategy

- A. Determine the number of computer and peripherals needed according to student projects.
- B. Determine technologies needed to support planned courses
- C. Maintain E-Mail system, Moodle system, etc., where appropriate at the school
- A. Analyze student performance through test scores such as MAP, HSAP, and PASS. Use report card to identify technology resources needed to support learning objectives.
- B. Ensure access to DISCUS, SCETV Streamline, and other initiatives available to our schools.
- A. Maintain T-1 or relevant Internet connection
- B. Proactively monitor firewalls and filtering systems to ensure adhere to state and federal guidelines

Professional Capacity, focus on this area will include the development of a technology professional development plan which includes all teachers, administrators, and staff in the District with the aim of increasing their proficiency and maximizing their effectiveness with technology.

Objective

Investigate the level of technological proficiencies of faculty and staff members.

Strategy

- A. Conduct needs assessment through surveys.
- B. The district will continue using the technology assessment tool provided by the South Carolina Department of Education to determine proficiency levels for all

certified staff at the school as well as all eighth graders in the district. Results from these assessments will be used to recommend appropriate professional development opportunities to assist staff, teachers and students in achieving technical proficiency.

Training information will be provided to ensure teachers use research-based best practices within their curriculum.

- A. Carry out research for available professional development opportunities focusing on technology integration and share information with teachers and staff.
- B. The district is currently evaluating use of Element K as an e-learning solution for teachers and staff.
- C. Research available conferences and workshops focusing on technology integration and share information with teachers and staff.

The district is in the process of working with South Carolina Department of Education with the ePortfolio program. The district utilizes South Carolina Department of Education's PCS (Professional Certified Staff) system.

Instructional Capacity, focus on this area will include using current and emerging technologies to create learner-centered instruction environments that enhance academic achievement.

Objective

Students will use chat rooms to conduct class group discussions.

Students will work with technology coaches for hands-on instructional learning.

Strategy

- A. As part of the instructional curriculum where appropriate, students will participate in class or group discussions using online chat sessions.
- A. Students will work on building computer labs using Linux and other open source products.
- B. Students, where appropriate, will utilize South Carolina Pathways.

Community Connections, focus on this area will include the collaboration of school and community stakeholders providing opportunities where information can have an impact in the planning and implementation of technology initiatives. The development of a community outreach program will have tremendous benefit in the successful implementation of technology utilized in our district.

Objectives

Parents will be provided access to school events and access to faculty and staff.

Provide a communication channel with staff, faculty, and students.

Alternative methods of instruction will be available to students.

Strategy

- A. The district has a Parent Involvement Committee with a representative from each school/community. In person meetings are conducted and currently evaluating an open source CRM solution as well as a message board to take advantage of current technology to communicate with our stakeholders.
- A. Each school assesses their capacity to provide E-Mail for students; others provide student with E-Mail access. Other communication for students without, or in addition to, E-Mail, is through use of the students' mobile communication device. All staff and faculty are provided E-Mail.
- B. Students, where appropriate, will utilize South Carolina Pathways.
- A. The district has brick-and-mortar schools as well as virtual schools

Support Capacity, focus on this area will include support for technology in our district. All resources will be re-evaluated for total cost of ownership and streamlined based on those evaluations. Each functional job will have a standard list of technology equipment, software and training that will be provided.

Objective

Students will be provided a safe learning environment.

Planning for future needs.

Asset tracking.

Strategy

- A. We content filtering software, firewalls, and anti-virus software will be used and proactively monitored.
- A. The district and schools have an active technology team responsible for the leadership of technology both in the district and in the schools.
- A. The district uses an open source asset management system to track our technology inventory in lieu of commercial solutions due to budget constraints.

Better access to student information systems

Improved Internet access

- B. The district has a preliminary plan for the proper disposal and re-use of equipment. This plan is still in the process of being developed.
- A. The district is currently in migration from SASI to PowerSchool which presents a better access solution for faculty, staff, students, and parents/guardians.
- A. The district Information Technology department is in the process of migrating the district office, Calhoun Falls Charter School, and Spartanburg Charter School from a T-1 to a 10 Mbps MetroE Internet connection thanks to e-rate.

Budget

Technical Component	Funding Source	Cost
Conference Line	School (SC Connections Academy)	\$2,400.00
Internet	School (SC Connections Academy)	\$9,000.00
		\$11,400.00

Internet/Network Acceptable Use Policy

With each of the schools in the South Carolina Public Charter School district, their purpose for using the Internet is to support research and education. Students use must also be in support of education and research as well as consistent with the educational objectives of each school and/or those outlined by the South Carolina Public Charter School District. Using or transmitting any material in violation of any federal or state regulation is strictly prohibited. This includes, but not limited to, copyrighted material and obscene or threatening material. The South Carolina Public Charter School District and its schools also comply with the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA), which requires use of a content filtering solution.

Word of the Day

obstreperous
Noisy or unruly.

Login

Username

Password

Login

Lost password?

eMail list

There are no new messages

General inbox

The following computer use policy applies to all areas of the YEVA Charter School Student Portal and connected services. This policy is in addition to all other school policies.

Access

All students attending YEVA Charter School are permitted access to the Student Portal* and connecting services in accordance with these terms. Access may be restricted, monitored, or removed due to misuse.

*The services offered on the Student Portal are subject to change without notice.

Terms of Use

When using the Student Portal and connecting services, students must...

- Respect the rights of others.
- Remember to logout at the end of each session.

The following are not permitted at any time ...

- The creation, display, production, storage, circulation or transmission of pornographic or other offensive material in any form or medium. (Including sending, posting or displaying offensive images, language or any other type of offensive content including the bullying, harassment or intimidation of others.)
- Students must not create, store or transmit:
 - Defamatory or libelous material
 - Material that infringes copyright
 - Unsolicited commercial or advertising material
- Intentionally providing or submitting false information
- Intentionally restricting network traffic with high bandwidth use.
- Flooding forums and other services unnecessarily or with inappropriate content/material.
- Using other's passwords or logon identities.
- Using any service inappropriately during class time.
- Copying any code, software or content provided without permission.
- Violating copying laws, data protection laws and computer

misuse laws.

Disciplinary Action

Should a student violate this Computer Use Policy or any other policy of YEVA Charter School related to the use of the Student Portal, the offence will be logged and the following action may be taken...

- **One week restriction of services**

Access will be restricted to the minimum level which provides access to basic services for one week. This includes the removal of messaging and forum rights.

- **One Term restriction of services**

Access will be restricted to the minimum level which provides access to basic services for one term. This includes removal of messaging and forum rights. A copy of the offense will be sent to your homeroom teacher. This may include a temporary remove of IT facilities.

- **Permanent restriction of services**

Access will be restricted to the minimum level which provides access to basic services permanently or until a date decided by a member of the staff. A copy of the offense will be sent to your homeroom teacher. This may include removal of all IT facilities and further disciplinary procedures.

- **Removal of all IT services**

Access to YEVA Charter School's IT services will be removed or heavily restricted as seen fit. A copy of the offense will be sent to your homeroom teacher. This may include further disciplinary procedures.

Fig. 1 – A sample Internet Usage Policy



clayrf

Access to the page:

<http://www.playboy.com>

... has been denied for the following reason:

Weighted phrase limit exceeded.

You are seeing this error because what you attempted to access appears to contain, or is labeled as containing, material that has been deemed inappropriate.

If you have any questions, contact the school principal.

Fig. 2 – A sample display when a student attempts to access an inappropriate web site

The district continues to research, develop and utilize best practices for procuring and integrating technology into the schools. We are continually looking for new funding sources and ways to more efficiently use existing funds. Any questions concerning the technology plan can be directed to Rodney Clay at (803) 734-1105 or rclay@scpcsd.sc.gov.